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Agenda item 117
Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Financial reports and audited financial statements, and reports of the Board of Auditors

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the report of the Board of Auditors on the operations of the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1998.[1] The Committee also considered the reports of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/54/140) and implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors concerning United Nations funds and programmes (A/54/140/Add.1), as well as two notes by the Secretary-General transmitting to the General Assembly letters dated 29 June 1999 from the Chairman of the Board of Auditors: (a) transmitting the report of the Board on implementation of its recommendations, submitted in accordance with Assembly resolution 52/212 B of 31 March 1998 (A/54/159); and (b) transmitting comments of the Board on the report of the Secretary-General on the hiring and use of consultants in the Secretariat, submitted in accordance with section VIII of Assembly resolution 53/221 of 7 April 1999 (A/54/165). The Committee also had before it the report on measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the accounts of the voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1998 (A/AC.96/917/Add.1) and the report of the Secretary-General on the year 2000 compliance issue (A/C.5/54/3).

2. The Advisory Committee met with the Audit Operations Committee of the Board of Auditors to discuss the reports.

Voluntary funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

3. The Advisory Committee notes that many of the weaknesses identified in the audit have been covered in previous reports of the Board of Auditors and commented upon by the Committee. The Committee appreciates measures taken or proposed to be taken by the Administration to implement current and past recommendations of the Board, as outlined in the annex to the report of the Board[1] and in document A/AC.96/917/Add.1.

4. In this connection, the Advisory Committee notes that although considerable progress has been achieved in clearing outstanding balances of cash advances to implementing

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partners, the problem of timely receipt of audit certificates, in particular from government implementing partners, persists. The Committee fully shares the concern of the Board on this issue and stresses the importance of implementing fully the Board's recommendation that the Administration assess reasons for non-compliance and draw up a strategy of how to deal with this question in consultation with the Board.

5. The Advisory Committee is very concerned about the statement, contained in paragraph 3 (i) of document A/AC.96/917/Add.1, that with regard to government partners, the influence of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) is limited, and that in certain countries UNHCR has no alternative than to work with government partners. Audit certification has been a subject of extensive comments by the Committee and the Board. As has been stated previously by the Committee, for example, in paragraphs 95 and 96 of its report contained in document A/53/513, the certification process is an important element in the accountability of implementing partners. It is the view of the Committee, therefore, that all implementing partners without exception must comply with this requirement. In this connection, the Committee notes that, as indicated in paragraphs 62-72 of the report of the Board,[1] the quality of the performance of implementing partners continues to be poor.

6. The Advisory Committee notes from paragraph 3 (i) of document A/AC.96/917/Add.1 the intention of the Office of the High Commissioner to make payments for these audits to allow government auditors to give priority to UNHCR-funded activities. The Committee is of the view that before a decision is made to pay government auditors, the cost-effectiveness of such an option should be determined after all other options have been explored. The provision of assistance to implementing partners was covered in the report of the Committee contained in document A/51/533, in particular paragraph 27. Accordingly, bearing in mind its previous recommendations on the subject, the Committee recommends that UNHCR formulate the criteria for and the conditions under which such assistance should be granted, including guidelines to ensure delivery of the services for which assistance would be rendered to concerned implementing government partners.

7. The findings and recommendations of the Board concerning the subjects covered in paragraphs 80-85 and 99-106 of its report[1] have been taken into account in the observations of the Advisory Committee on the annual programme budget of UNHCR for 2000.

Implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors

8. The reports of the Secretary-General on implementation of the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/54/140 and Add.1) have been submitted through the Board in accordance with General Assembly resolution 52/212 B. The Board's report on the implementation of its recommendations is contained in the appendix to the letter dated 29 June 1999 from the Chairman of the Board addressed to the Secretary-General (A/54/159, annex). The Advisory Committee commends the Board for its report. The Committee notes from paragraph 9 of that report that the bulk of the recommendations, 100 out of 156, had been partially implemented. The Committee requests that in the next report the Board further analyse this category to identify recommendations that are under implementation and those that have been partially implemented but for which no further action is contemplated. Information on the time taken to implement recommendations of the Board would also be useful in demonstrating the efficiency and priority attention of the administrations concerned.

Other matters

9. With respect to the implementation of recommendation 11 (a) as reported by the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) in its response to the recommendations of the Board of Auditors (A/54/140/Add.1, chap. II, sect. D, para. 2), the Advisory Committee notes that the Board intends to follow up on this question (see A/54/159, annex, appendix, para. 27). Further comments by the Committee will be made in the context of its examination of the audit report on UNICEF for 1998-1999. In the meantime, the Committee wishes to point out that the statement made by the UNICEF Administration in paragraph 8 (a) of its response is technically incorrect. According to UNICEF, the payment of funds by UNICEF to Governments is taken as an expenditure because the ownership of the funds is transferred to the Government at the time the payment is made. The implication of accepting this view is far wider than may have been understood by the UNICEF Administration, since the statement might be construed as implying that funds transferred to Governments are grants to be used by Governments in the manner of their choosing. The Committee points out that whereas Governments may have custody of funds made available by UNICEF, they do not own the funds, and if funds are not fully spent for the purposes intended by UNICEF, they have to be refunded.

10. Indeed, its own rules require that if such funds are not used for the purpose for which they were transferred or if amounts are not used, then UNICEF must be refunded accordingly (financial circular No. 15 (Rev.1) CF/DFM/1991/10, para. 3). In the opinion of the Advisory Committee, the nature of cash assistance by UNICEF is no different from advances made to implementing partners by UNHCR. For example, in paragraph 75 of its report,[1] the Board indicated that $13.5 million was refunded in 1998 by implementing partners as a result of the closure of projects, and that the closure of projects was delayed for periods ranging from one to five years. The Committee intends to follow up on this question in connection with its examination of the Board's report on UNICEF for 1998-1999.

11. The Advisory Committee takes note of the comments of the Board on the report of the Secretary-General on the hiring and use of consultants in the Secretariat (A/54/165, annex, appendix). The Committee is reporting separately on the related report of the Secretary-General (A/54/164) as well as a report on consultants and individual contractors (A/C.5/54/4).

12. The Advisory Committee also takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the year 2000 compliance issue (A/C.5/54/3). That report was submitted pursuant to a request of the Committee (A/53/513, para. 16) that the United Nations Secretariat coordinate the preparation of a report by the Administration and the administration of United Nations funds and programmes on the progress made with respect to the year 2000 compliance issue.

13. The Advisory Committee welcomes the measures taken or to be taken with respect to the year 2000 compliance issue. During its consideration of the report (A/C.5/54/3), the Committee was provided with information not only on the progress made since the document was issued but also on measures that were likely to be taken before the Fifth Committee acts on the report. In this connection, the Committee requests the Secretariat to provide the Fifth Committee with the most up-to-date information available on this question.

14. The Advisory Committee notes that the report contains very little information on measures taken to maintain the logistical and operational readiness of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations in the field. The Committee also notes that there is no system-wide picture of the state of preparedness of the members of the United Nations system with regard to the year 2000 compliance issue, and requests the Secretary-General to draw the attention of the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to this need.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the General Assembly, Fifty-fourth session, Supplement No. 5 E* (A/54/5/Add.5), chap. I.

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Fifty-fourth session
Agenda item 99 (h)
Sustainable development and international economic cooperation: implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Twenty-first special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development

Report of the Secretary-General

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I. Introduction

1. The present report has been prepared in response to General Assembly resolution 53/183 of 15 December 1998, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General to submit to it at its fifty-fourth session a report on the special session for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development. The special session took place at United Nations Headquarters from 30 June to 2 July 1999. During its plenary meetings, it was addressed by 152 Member States, 10 observers and 3 non-governmental organizations. At the opening session, the Secretary-General emphasized the connection between population and development and praised the Conference for promoting a fuller understanding of those interactions. He underscored the linkage between sexual and reproductive health and human rights and urged that efforts be made fully to implement the Programme of Action, particularly the financial resource levels agreed to in Cairo in 1994.

2. At the first plenary meeting of its twenty-first special session the General Assembly established an Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole to consider agenda item 8, entitled "Overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development". In connection with its consideration of the agenda item, the Ad Hoc Committee had before it the report of the Commission on Population and Development acting as the Preparatory Committee for the special session. Mr. Anwarul Chowdhury (Bangladesh), who had served as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, was elected Chairman of the Ad Hoc Committee. Over the three-day period, the Ad Hoc Committee held four formal meetings and a number of informal meetings to negotiate the proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action. During the formal meetings, representatives of 12 United Nations specialized agencies, one intergovernmental organization and 11 non-governmental organizations made statements.

3. At its fourth formal meeting, on 1 July, the Ad Hoc Committee, after negotiations held in the informal meetings, and noting the reservations expressed by the representatives of Argentina and Nicaragua, decided to recommend a text entitled "Proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development" to the General Assembly and proposed a draft resolution for adoption by the special session. After the adoption of the "Report of the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole of the Twenty-first Special Session of the General Assembly" (A/S-21/5), five delegations expressed reservations.[1] Subsequently, the closing plenary of the special session adopted by consensus the resolution on key actions (A/S-21/5/Add.1). After the adoption of the resolution, 13 States made interpretive statements or expressed reservations.[2]

4. The present report briefly reviews some aspects and events of the review process and focuses on the key actions contained in document A/S-21/5/Add.1. It also highlights some of the findings regarding progress and constraints in the implementation to date of the Programme of Action.

II. The review and appraisal process

5. The review and appraisal process and the special session were characterized by broad United Nations system-wide participation and the involvement of a wide range of civil society organizations. In particular, there was close collaboration between the Population Division of the Department of Economics and Social Affairs and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). United Nations organizations and representatives of civil society took an active part in the round tables, technical meetings and the International Forum for the Operational Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (February 1999). During the 1998-1999 period, three United Nations inter-agency meetings were held and there were regular periodic briefings for Member States and non-governmental organizations at Headquarters. UNFPA field offices carried out briefings at the country level. This participatory approach and the transparency with which all meetings and negotiations were carried out greatly contributed to the success of the review process and of the special session.

A. Technical meetings and regional consultations

6. The review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action concentrated primarily on policy changes and operational experiences at the country level in order to identify facilitating factors and obstacles encountered during the initial five-year period since the Conference. Those concrete experiences provided a basis for delineating further actions needed to accelerate and fine-tune the implementation of the Programme of Action.

7. Round tables and technical meetings, sponsored by UNFPA, afforded an opportunity for in-depth examination of the implementation of the Programme of Action. These included three round-table meetings on: adolescent reproductive health (14-17 April 1998, New York, United States); reproductive rights and implementation of reproductive health programmes, women's empowerment, male involvement and human rights (22-25 June 1998, Kampala, Uganda); and partnership with civil society to implement the Programme of Action (27-30 July 1998, Dhaka, Bangladesh); and four technical symposiums: international migration and development (29 June-3 July 1998, The Hague, Netherlands); population ageing (6-9 October 1998, Brussels, Belgium); reproductive health services in crisis situations (3-5 November 1998, Rennes, France); and population change and economic development (2-6 November 1998, Bellagio, Italy).

8. Regional consultations, convened by the five United Nations regional commissions, reviewed and appraised the implementation of the Programme of Action. The meetings identified progress achieved and constraints encountered and proposed key future actions for each region in the particular context of the respective regions. A detailed account of the round tables and technical and regional meetings is found in the report submitted to the General Assembly at its fifty-third session (A/53/407). The results of those meetings were available at the time of the special session.

B. The Hague Forum

9. The International Forum for the Operational Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (known as The Hague Forum), held in The Hague, 8-12 February 1999, drew on the outcomes of the technical and regional meetings to formulate operationally pertinent recommendations for the next phases of implementing the Programme of Action. Organized by UNFPA and hosted by the Government of the Netherlands, The Hague Forum brought together a wide range of partners, including ministers and other high-level governmental officials from 177 countries and territories, parliamentarians, representatives of United Nations organizations and specialized agencies, intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, youth and the media.

10. The Forum was preceded by three meetings of key partner groups committed to the implementation of the Programme of Action — namely, the International Forum of Parliamentarians on Population and Development (4-6 February 1999); the NGO Forum (6-7 February 1999), which gave non-governmental organizations an opportunity to formulate their contribution to the Forum and the special session; and the Youth Forum (6-7 February 1999), convened to examine how implementation of the Programme of Action met the needs of young people.

11. The report of The Hague Forum provided an assessment of progress to date in five substantive areas addressed by its Main Committee:

(a) Creating an enabling environment for further implementation of the Programme of Action;

(b) Enhancing gender equality, equity and empowerment of women;

(c) Promoting reproductive health, including family planning and sexual health, and reproductive rights;

(d) Strengthening partnerships;

(e) Mobilizing and monitoring resources for further implementation of the Programme of Action.

The Forum report identified actions necessary in each of these areas in order to enhance the implementation of the Programme of Action. It was submitted to the Preparatory Committee for the special session and was drawn upon in the preparation of the Secretary-General's report for the special session containing proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action.

C. UNFPA field inquiry

12. UNFPA conducted a global field inquiry in mid-1998 to assess progress and constraints encountered in the implementation of the Programme of Action. The Inquiry focused on the following key areas: policies and programmes in population and development; gender equality, equity and women's empowerment; reproductive rights and reproductive health care; and government partnerships and collaboration with civil society. A total of 114 responses were received from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, and 18 developed countries reported their experiences.

Progress

13. The report of the 1998 UNFPA field inquiry found concrete results in implementation, including integrating population concerns into development strategies, institutional changes to accommodate the operationalization of the Programme of Action; policy, legislative and institutional changes in the areas of population and

development and reproductive health and rights; recognition of the enhanced role of civil society; an increased involvement of non-governmental organizations; and improved partnership among United Nations agencies and organizations.

14. Countries have begun initiatives to promote the participation of women at policy- and decision-making levels and progress has been made in advocating for the protection of the well-being of the girl-child. Several countries passed legislation outlawing violence against women, with particular focus on the elimination of harmful practices such as female genital mutilation.

15. All countries have accepted the concept of reproductive health, and previously separate family planning programmes are now being integrated into comprehensive reproductive health packages available at the primary health care level. Reproductive health is increasingly considered a priority in health services in emergency situations. Some countries are beginning to address the sexual and reproductive health needs of adolescents, and some concrete measures have been taken to promote male involvement in sexual and reproductive health through advocacy campaigns. There has been some progress in providing access to a full range of safe and reliable family planning methods, and a wider range of contraceptive choices has become available. There is also greater awareness of the risks of maternal mortality and morbidity and recognition of them as developmental and human rights issues.

16. Recognizing the important role of civil society in implementation of the Programme of Action, many Governments have adopted significant measures to promote the involvement of civil society groups in policy formulation, implementation and monitoring. Some Governments have taken measures to strengthen the institutional capacity of civil society, including the provision of funds and the removal of legal restrictions. Parliamentarians have taken action to adopt legislation on reproductive health and gender-based violence, and they have been instrumental in ensuring provision of national budgetary allocations for population and development.

Constraints

17. A serious lack of financial resources remains one of the primary obstacles to full implementation of the Programme of Action. Donor funding for population activities has stagnated and is far below the required US $17 billion by the year 2000, as agreed to at the Conference.

18. Developing countries have made some progress in increasing the share of domestic budgets allocated to population. Unfortunately, mobilizing domestic resources for financial crises and dislocations have impeded efforts to generate the required resources to implement national population policies and programmes.

19. Despite some progress, socio-cultural factors continue to hinder the full achievement of gender equality and equity. Women still face violence at all stages in their life cycle, and poverty remains disproportionately high among female-headed households. The feminization of poverty has increased such forms of violence as trafficking and forced prostitution. Women are still very much underrepresented in positions of power and decision-making, and they typically earn less than men for work of equal value. In many societies, sons are favoured over daughters when choices have to be made. The lack of coordination mechanisms and funding constraints often preclude more extensive collaboration between government and civil society groups. Often, there are no legal frameworks, regulations or guidelines to facilitate partnerships with non-governmental organizations. Insufficient human and financial resources and a lack of technical capacity in both Governments and non-governmental organizations also impede effective partnerships. The private sector continues to remain underinvolved in population and development activities.

III. The special session

A. Preparatory Committee

20. The Commission on Population and Development, which met in an open-ended session at United Nations Headquarters from 24 March to 1 April 1999, acted as the Preparatory Committee for the special session. The Committee had before it two information documents: "Review and appraisal of the progress made in achieving the goals and objectives of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development" (E/CN.9/1999/PC/2); and "Report of the International Forum for the Operational Review and Appraisal of the Implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development" (E/CN.9/1999/PC/3); and one document for consideration, "Proposals for key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development" (E/CN.9/1999/PC/4). This last-mentioned report served as the basis for formulating a document to be submitted to the special session. Although it reached agreement on a number of sections, the Preparatory Committee felt that more time was needed to

negotiate certain other sections. Hence, it agreed to meet for informal consultations at United Nations Headquarters from 5 to 7 May.

21. During those informal consultations, a number of paragraphs were adopted *ad referendum*. However, there were some problem issues — e.g., adolescents; family planning methods; abortion; resource mobilization — on which negotiations could not be completed. It was decided that the Preparatory Committee would meet again four days prior to the special session (24-25 and 28-29 June). When the Preparatory Committee ended on 29 June, several contentious paragraphs remained. The resolution of those paragraphs was left to the Ad Hoc Committee of the Whole.

22. The Commission on Population and Development, acting as the Preparatory Committee, also considered arrangements for the accreditation of non-governmental organizations at the special session. Noting that, pursuant to General Assembly resolutions 52/188 of 18 December 1997 and 53/183 of 15 December 1998, the President of the Assembly was invited, in consultation with Member States, to propose appropriate modalities for the effective involvement of non-governmental organizations in the special session, the Commission decided to invite to the special session those non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council and non-governmental organizations already accredited to the Conference and/or the Preparatory Committee. The Commission also decided that the accreditation of other interested non-governmental organizations, including those that had applied for consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, would be examined by a committee composed of the Bureau of the Preparatory Committee and the Secretariat by 14 May 1999. The Committee would make appropriate recommendations to the Preparatory Committee at its resumed session for a decision, provided that requests for accreditation were accompanied by information on the organization's competence and relevance to the subject of the special session.

B. Key actions

23. At the final plenary meeting, held late on 2 July, the 177 Member States participating in the special session adopted by consensus "Key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development" (A/S-21/5/Add.1). This comprehensive document, arrived at through lengthy negotiation, affirmed the Programme of Action and made a number of noteworthy advances. For example, it called attention to population and development concerns, noting the linkages between population, economic growth and environment. It recognized the implications of changing age structure and the ageing of the population, and underscored the urgent need for policies and programmes to deal with the causes of international migration, internal migration and urbanization, and the resultant dislocations. The special session called on Governments to ensure that the human rights of women and girls, particularly the freedom from coercion, discrimination and violence, including harmful practices and sexual exploitation, were respected, protected and promoted through the development, implementation and effective enforcement of gender-sensitive policies and legislation.

24. The special session called for intensified action in the following areas: reproductive and sexual health; maternal mortality; the reproductive health needs of adolescents; reducing abortion and addressing the health consequences of unsafe abortion; prevention of HIV/AIDS; gender issues and education. In several key areas, it recommended new benchmarks:

(a) The 1990 illiteracy rate for women and girls should be halved by 2005; and by 2010, the net primary school enrolment ratio for children of both sexes should be at least 90 per cent;

(b) By 2005, 60 per cent of primary health care and family planning facilities should offer the widest achievable range of safe and effective family planning methods, essential obstetric care, prevention and management of reproductive tract infections, including sexually transmitted diseases, and barrier methods to prevent infection; 80 per cent of facilities should offer such services by 2010, and all should do so by 2015;

(c) At least 40 per cent of all births should be assisted by skilled attendants where the maternal mortality rate is very high, and 80 per cent globally, by 2005; these figures should be 50 and 85 per cent, respectively, by 2010; and 60 and 90 per cent by 2015;

(d) The gap between the proportion of individuals using contraceptives and the proportion expressing a desire to space or limit their families should be reduced by half by 2005, by 75 per cent by 2010, and by 100 per cent by 2015. Recruitment targets or quotas should not be used in attempting to reach this goal;

(e) To reduce vulnerability to HIV/AIDS infection, at least 90 per cent of young men and women, aged 15-24, should have access by 2005 to preventive methods — such as female and male condoms, voluntary testing, counselling,

and follow up, and at least 95 per cent by 2010. HIV infection rates in persons 15-24 years of age should be reduced by 25 per cent in the most affected countries by 2005 and by 25 per cent globally by 2010.

25. Recognizing that financial resources are critical to the achievement of the Conference goals and to reaching the more ambitious benchmarks, the special session urged developed countries to redouble their efforts to mobilize funds in accordance with the levels agreed to at Cairo. It called upon developing countries and countries with economies in transition to strengthen their commitment to attaining the Conference goals and to continue mobilizing domestic resources. The special session reiterated that the international community should provide the necessary financial and technical assistance to support developing countries and countries with economies in transition to implement the Programme of Action. It urged particular attention to countries in Africa and countries dealing with the consequences of emergency situations and financial crises. South/South cooperation and the 20/20 Initiative were cited as modalities for reaching population and social sector objectives.

IV. Next steps

26. The twenty-first special session of the General Assembly was widely regarded as a most successful endeavour. It demonstrated the effectiveness of the United Nations in building global consensus through open and inclusive discussion. It marked the culmination of five years of impressive progress in implementing the Cairo consensus on population as a development issue of concern to all countries. It was especially successful in effectively involving civil society groups, most notably in having three non-governmental organization representatives address the final plenary meeting.

27. The special session affirmed the commitments made in Cairo in 1994. The progress of the first five years provides an encouraging basis on which to build. Formidable challenges, however, still remain. Resource mobilization for population activities must be placed high on the global development agenda if the international community is fully to implement the Conference goals and objectives.

28. The report on key actions (A/S-21/5/Add.1) provides a practical guide for focusing and intensifying implementation efforts. At the end of October 1999, the Task Force on Basic Social Services for All (BSSA) will meet to discuss how best the United Nations agencies and organizations can continue effective collaboration, particularly at the country level, to promote the further implementation of the Programme of Action. The Task Force will also attempt to identify possible new indicators to correspond with the benchmarks agreed to at the special session and the updating of existing previously agreed indicators.

29. Over the next few years, there will be a number of special sessions of the General Assembly marking the fifth anniversaries of other major United Nations conferences and summits. Efforts are being made to work with the respective secretariats of those events to convey the "lessons learned" from the twenty-first special session. To that end, a briefing on organizational and substantive issues has already been held with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs, which is responsible for the twenty-second special session, for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (27-28 September 1999); the special session entitled "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the Twenty-first Century" (5-9 June 2000); and the special session on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and further initiatives (26-30 June 1999). Also, a briefing on the twenty-first special session will be made to the Administrative Committee on Coordination at its second session (29-30 October 1999).

30. Attention should now turn to possible options to mark the tenth anniversary in 2004, of the adoption of the Programme of Action. The Bureau of the Commission on Population and Development at its 1999 inter-sessional meeting recommended that options for the 2004 event be discussed by the Commission at its thirty-third session.

Notes

[1] Argentina, Guatemala, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Nicaragua, Sudan.

[2] Australia, China, Egypt, Holy See, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Jordan, Kuwait, Malta, Morocco, Qatar, Yemen, United Arab Emirates, United States of America.

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Agenda item 12
Report of the Economic and Social Council

Proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001

Revised estimates resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999

Report of the Secretary-General

1. The present report is submitted to inform the General Assembly of the requirements resulting from resolutions and decisions adopted by the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1999.

2. The Council adopted a number of resolutions and decisions in which it authorized relevant functional commissions, standing committees or expert bodies to undertake additional activities, including meetings, in excess of those initially programmed in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 (A/54/6/Rev.1 (vols. I-III)). In accordance with rule 31 of its rules of procedure, the Council was provided, where appropriate, with a statement of programme budget implications prior to the adoption of these resolutions and decisions.

3. As reflected in the report of the Commission on Human Rights (E/1999/23 (Part II, annex IV)) and of the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice (E/1999/30, annex II), the Council was informed, *inter alia*, that the additional requirements relating to the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights at its fifty-fifth session and the Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice at its eighth session would be met from within the provisions made respectively under sections 22. Human rights, and 14. Crime prevention and criminal justice, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001.

4. With regard to additional conference-servicing requirements, the Council was informed in each relevant case that provisions had been made in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, not only for meetings already programmed at the time of budget preparation but also for meetings or extensions of meetings that might be authorized subsequently, provided that the number and distribution of meetings were consistent with the pattern of meetings of past years. On that basis, it is estimated that no additional resources would be required under section 2. General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 as a result of the resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council.

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I. Additional requirements entailed by resolutions and decisions adopted by the Council

Resolution 1999/61
Science and technology for development

5. In paragraphs 11 and 21 of its resolution 1999/61 of 30 July 1999, the Council requested the secretariat of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development:

(a) To assist in identifying and disseminating balanced information on biotechnology, intellectual property rights and biosafety;

(b) To examine case studies of approaches to address issues related to technology, intellectual property rights and biosafety issues in a practical, understandable and concrete way;

(c) To prepare a succinct analytical report on relevant activities within the United Nations system, including the outcome of the World Science Conference, for consideration under the item entitled "Functioning of the Commission on Science and Technology for Development, including its role in coordinating science and technology for development".

6. The decisions of the Council contained in resolution 1999/61 relate to section 11A. Trade and development, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. The programme budget implications of these decisions were submitted to the Council in document E/1999/L.49 and the additional requirements were estimated at $86,900, as follows:

(a) $55,300 under general temporary assistance, representing seven work-months at the P-4 level, to carry out the activities described under subparagraphs 5 (a) and (b) above;

(b) $31,600 also under general temporary assistance, representing four work-months at the P-4 level to carry out the activities described in subparagraph 5 (c) above.

Decision 1999/287
Additional extraordinary sessions of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

7. By its decision 1999/287 of 30 July 1999, the Council, concerned that existing meeting arrangements for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights no longer permitted the Committee to fully discharge its responsibilities under the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and Council resolution 1985/17 of 28 May 1985 in an efficient and timely manner, approved the holding of two additional three-week extraordinary sessions of the Committee, as well as respective pre-sessional working groups of one week's duration during 2000 and 2001, provided additional funding was made available; requested that those sessions be entirely used for the consideration of reports of the States parties in order to reduce the backlog of reports; and requested the Committee to consider ways and means to improve the efficiency of its working methods and to report to the Council in 2001 on the actions taken in this regard.

8. Council decision 1999/287 relates to sections 2. General Assembly affairs and conference services and 22. Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. The programme budget implications of this decision were submitted to the Council in document E/1999/L.55. The additional requirements were set forth as follows:

(a) The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights normally holds two three-week sessions per year, in April/May and November/December, respectively. A pre-sessional working group meets for one week immediately after the conclusion of each session. Travel allowance and daily subsistence allowance (DSA) are paid to the 18 members of the Committee attending the annual sessions, and DSA is paid to an average of only 5 members participating in the pre-sessional working group meetings;

(b) Provisions have been included under sections 22. Human rights, and 2. General Assembly affairs and conference services, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 for two annual sessions of the Committee and two annual pre-sessional working group meetings. No provisions have been included under these sections for the two additional sessions of the Committee and the two pre-sessional working groups;

(c) It is estimated that an additional provision of $353,400 under section 22. Human rights, would be required during the biennium 2000-2001 as follows:

(i) $334,000 for the travel allowance and DSA of the 18 members of the Committee attending the additional sessions in 2000 and 2001;

(ii) $19,400 for the DSA of 5 members of the Committee participating in the additional pre-sessional working group meetings in 2000 and 2001.

II. Conclusions

9. In summary, the requests contained in Council resolution 1999/61 and Council decision 1999/287 give rise to requirements for the biennium 2000-2001 under sections 11A. Trade and development, and 22. Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. No provisions have been made under these sections of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001 to cover the additional requirements.

10. It will be recalled that, under the procedures established by the General Assembly in its resolutions 41/213 of 19 December 1986 and 42/211 of 21 December 1987, a contingency fund is established for each biennium to accommodate additional expenditures derived from legislative mandates not provided for in the programme budget. Under this procedure, if additional expenditures are proposed that exceed the resources available from the contingency fund, the activities concerned can be implemented only through redeployment of resources from low-priority areas or modifications of existing activities. Otherwise, such additional activities will have to be deferred to a later biennium.

11. It is not possible, at this stage, to identify activities within sections 11A. Trade and development, and 22. Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001, that could be terminated, deferred, curtailed or modified during that biennium to finance the costs of the additional activities recommended by the Council in resolution 1999/61 and decision 1999/287.

12. Consequently, an additional provision of $440,300 would be required over and above the resources proposed under sections 11A. Trade and development, and 22. Human rights, of the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2000-2001. This provision would represent a charge against the contingency fund and, as such, would require related additional appropriations of $86,900 under section 11A and $353,400 under section 22.